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SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2004

THIS REPORT WILL PRESENT A TURKISH PRESS SUMMARY UNDER
THREE THEMES:

HEADLINES
BRIEFING
EDITORIAL OPINION

HEADLINES

MASS APPEALS

Denktas makes an opening at Cyprus talks - Milliyet
Denktas one step ahead - Hurriyet
Denktas proposal stuns Greek Cypriots - Sabah
Greek Cypriot Press: Horror movie in New York - Turkiye
Vietnam veteran Kerry wins again, Clark quits - Sabah
Mubarek defends Iraq's territorial integrity - Turkiye

OPINION MAKERS

Denktas boosts hope for change - Radikal
Turkish Cypriots: Annan should fill in blanks - Cumhuriyet
High Hopes for Cyprus solution - Radikal
US intervenes for Cyprus - Yeni Safak
Bombs shake Baghdad, 47 dead - Radikal
Baghdad -- city of death - Yeni Safak
Kissinger: Iraq will become another Yugoslavia - Yeni Safak
Israel kills 15 in Gaza - Yeni Safak

BRIEFING

Cyprus: Turkish Cypriot leader Denktas proposed that guarantor countries Turkey and Greece should join negotiations to resolve the Cyprus problem if there is no agreement by March 20. In the event that remaining disagreements cannot be resolved in four-way talks, it would be left to UN Secretary General Annan to arbitrate a fair solution. TRNC 'Foreign Minister' Serdar Denktas said that Annan reacted positively to the proposal from the Turkish side, but that the Greek Cypriots had asked for more time. Papers agree that the surprise Turkish proposal has put the Greek Cypriots in a difficult position. The Greek Cypriots had been maneuvering to stall the Cyprus peace talks until May 1, according to Turkish press reports, but now are shocked in the face of the Denktas proposal. The Greek Cypriots do not want to jeopardize their gains in Cyprus by agreeing to allow Annan to fill in the blanks if there is no agreement.

Before the talks resumed Wednesday in New York, US officials had asked Ankara and Athens to pressure Denktas and Papadopoulos for a breakthrough. Secretary Powell called Foreign Minister Gul to request that he urge the Turkish Cypriots to agree to restarting the talks in line with the UN-sponsored peace plan. The US and UK Ambassadors to Ankara met with Justice Minister Cicek on Wednesday to discuss the issue, according to "Milliyet." Ankara postponed a planned parliamentary debate about Cyprus on Wednesday for fear of upsetting the negotiations in New York. The debate is now scheduled for next Tuesday. Egypt's Mubarek visits Turkey: On a one-day working visit to Ankara, Egyptian President Hosni Mubarek said he was against the political restructuring of Iraq along ethnic lines. He discussed with Ankara possibilities for Cairo's active involvement in settling disagreements between Israel and Syria. Mubarek expressed concerns about the the 'Greater Middle East Project' now under discussion in the United States, according to "Cumhuriyet." FM Gul reportedly responded that Turkey is 'part of the geography' of the Greater Middle East and therefore must take an 'active role' in the process of change.

PM Erdogan Notes Two-Way Rotations Through Incirlik: In response to a reporter's question following his meeting with visiting Egyptian President Mubarek, PM Erdogan noted that permission for US troop rotations 'from Iraq to the United States and from the United States into Iraq' through Incirlik would remain valid until May 2004.

Amnesty International delegation in Ankara: An Amnesty International (AI) delegation headed by AI President Irene Khan arrives in Ankara today for meetings with Prime Minister Erdogan and several other ministers. The delegation will press for the release of Leyla Zana, former Kurdish member of the Turkish parliament from the Democracy Party (DEP). The AI group will complain to Erdogan about ongoing instances of arbitrary detention and torture, and will urge an end to pressure on human rights activists.

EDITORIAL OPINION: Cyprus

"Last Chance on Cyprus"

Yilmaz Oztuna wrote in the conservative *Turkiye* (2/12): "It seems that the New York negotiation process on Cyprus is going very well, and that Denktas has made a good performance. Settlement of the Cyprus issue should not be a concern for advocates of Turkish nationalism. Neither Turkey nor the Turkish Cypriots will be harmed by a settlement. Realistically speaking, settlement of the Cyprus issue will provide more benefit than harm. Resolving the Cyprus issue will broaden Turkish diplomatic vision and strengthen Turkey's hand internationally. Turkey should remain at the table and should negotiate in good faith. A solution to the Cyprus issue seems likely this time."

"Everybody needs a settlement"

Sami Kohen noted in the mass appeal *Milliyet* (2/12): "One of the arguments about the ongoing Cyprus negotiations is whether or not the Greek Cypriots are eager for a settlement before the May 1 deadline. Turkish public opinion widely believes that the Greek Cypriots will not work for a solution due to the fact that their EU membership is taken for granted. The fact is, however, that the Greek Cypriots may not be as comfortable as we have been led to believe. They are aware that the absence of a settlement has some traps for them as well. . The prospect of a failed settlement process also poses certain difficulties for the Greeks. Athens will have to cope with a deterioration of Turkish-Greek ties and a continued deadlock over Aegean issues. . There is also another important fact about the Cyprus process: this is a rare case in which US policy is in the same line with the EU and the UN. This means that there is an international consensus which should not be missed."

EDELMAN